## SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

LANSING, MICHIGAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: TOM LENARD

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## DEMOCRATS WELCOME MOVEMENT ON MINIMUM WAGE

"But Don't Play Games with Low-Income Workers' Expectations"

LANSING- Senate Democrats welcomed movement today in the Michigan Senate that would, if supported by the House and signed by Governor Granholm, raise the state minimum wage to \$6.95 by this fall. The Democrats said they welcome any movement that might help Michigan's struggling low-income workers and hoped that the GOP's recent conversion on the minimum wage issue is sincere.

"The impact of raising the minimum wage is that one out of six hourly Michigan workers can look forward to increased wages and an improved standard of living for their efforts, "Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) said. "The action taken by the Michigan Senate today sends a message that we care about Michigan families and Michigan workers."

The substitute amendment passed by the Senate today will raise the state minimum wage to \$6.95 on October 1, 2006. The minimum wage will increase again on July 1, 2007 to \$7.15 and will be raised for a final time to \$7.40 on July 1, 2008. However, unlike an earlier proposal offered by the Senate Democrats, the amended bill will not tie future minimum wage increases to the rate of inflation nor codify the annual increases in the state constitution.

"I'm extremely proud that my Senate colleagues have recognized the value of our low-wage workers and their right to earn a fair and equitable wage," Sen. Dennis Olshove (D-Warren) said. "This increase in the minimum wage will boost employment, worker morale, and benefit the Michigan economy."

Senate Democrats first introduced the minimum wage legislation in March of 2005. Democrats say they will continue to put their full support behind a petition drive to raise the state minimum wage unless a legislative agreement is reached.